



AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS  
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Reference No. 6.35

UNEMPLOYMENT, FEBRUARY 1976  
PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES

MAIN FEATURES

- In February 1976 the estimated number of unemployed persons, as defined in paragraph 3 below, was 273,300 (4.5 per cent of the estimated labour force), 5,800 less than in November 1975. The figure includes persons who stated that they were actively looking for either full-time or part-time work during the survey week.
- There were 145,900 unemployed males (3.7 per cent of the male labour force) and 127,300 unemployed females (5.9 per cent of the female labour force).
- Of persons in the labour force aged 15-19 years about one in eight was unemployed (13.3 per cent). The unemployment rate for persons aged 20 years and over was 3.2 per cent.
- The estimated number of persons who did no work but would have taken a job during the survey week and who had been actively looking for work at some time in the four weeks before the interview week was 293,600.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This statement contains preliminary unemployment estimates for Australia derived from the quarterly population survey. More detailed estimates are published each quarter in *The Labour Force (Preliminary)* (Reference No. 6.32) and *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20).

The population survey

2. The survey is based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (about 30,000 houses, flats, etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc.), and covers about two-thirds of one per cent of the population of Australia. The information is obtained in February, May, August and November from the occupants of selected dwellings by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers. Interviews are carried out during a period of four weeks, so that in each of the months to which the survey relates, there are four survey weeks, chosen so as to fall within the limits of the calendar month or with minimum encroachment into the adjacent months. Because of special circumstances interviewing in February 1976 commenced one week later than usual.

Definition

3. For purposes of the survey, unemployed persons are defined as all civilians aged 15 years and over who, during the *whole of the week* prior to the interview week, did no work at all and either:

- did not have a job or business and were actively looking for work (including those who stated that they would have done so if they had not (i) been

temporarily ill, or (ii) believed no work was available, or (iii) already made definite arrangements to start in a new job in which they would have preferred to start during survey week) or

- had a job from which they were temporarily laid off without pay for the whole week.

4. Unemployed persons therefore comprise those looking for full-time work, those looking for part-time work and those temporarily laid off from either full-time or part-time jobs. This definition of unemployed persons conforms closely to that recommended by the Eighth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1954).

Reliability of the estimates

5. Since the estimates are based on a sample, they may differ from the figures that would have been obtained from a complete census using the same questionnaires and procedures. There are about two chances in three that the differences would be less than 4,000 for total unemployed males, less than 3,500 for total unemployed females and less than 5,000 for total unemployed persons, and about nineteen chances in twenty that they would be less than twice these figures. Further details about the survey and the reliability of the estimates will be found in the quarterly bulletin *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20).

Comparability with Commonwealth Employment Service figures

6. The sample estimates will differ from the number of persons registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service (C.E.S.) as not employed, awaiting placement in full-time employment, for a number of reasons, including the following:

- the survey estimates include persons looking for part-time work as well as those looking for full-time work
- they exclude persons who did any work at all during the survey week, even though they may subsequently have become unemployed and registered with the C.E.S., or have done so little work as not to lose eligibility for unemployment benefit
- they represent averages over a period (see paragraph 2), whereas the numbers registered with the C.E.S. refer to a particular day at the end of the month
- they are subject to sampling variability (see paragraph 5)
- they include some unemployed persons (particularly females) who do not register with the C.E.S.
- they exclude any persons registered as unemployed who find jobs but do not notify the C.E.S. at once that they have done so.

NOTE. Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in the table are due to rounding.

TABLE 1. - UNEMPLOYED PERSONS (a) : AUSTRALIA

Month	Looking for		Total	Age (years)		Per cent of labour force (b)				
				15-19		20 and over				
	Full-time work ('000)	Part-time work ('000)	Original ('000)	Seasonally adjusted (c) ('000)	Looking for first job ('000)	Total ('000)	15-19 ('000)	20 and over ('000)	Total Original	Seasonally adjusted
MALES										
1974 -										
February	51.0	5.3	56.3	48.1	7.2	18.8	37.5	5.1	1.1	1.5
May	40.8	4.3	45.2	49.8	*	10.4	34.8	2.9	1.0	1.2
August	56.3	4.5	60.8	72.3	*	15.2	45.5	4.5	1.3	1.6
November	99.0	12.4	111.4	106.9	17.0	42.7	68.7	11.9	1.9	2.9
1975 -										
February	137.1	6.7	143.8	122.3	13.4	41.6	102.2	11.1	2.9	3.7
May	117.4	7.1	124.5	139.5	8.3	30.8	93.7	8.5	2.7	3.2
August	116.3	8.3	124.6	(d)151.0	9.6	37.5	87.0	10.6	2.5	3.2
November (e)	138.4	11.2	149.6	(d)144.4	20.3	52.9	96.7	14.6	2.7	3.8
1976 -										
February (f)	136.4	9.5	145.9	†(d)123.9	15.9	47.7	98.2	12.5	2.8	3.7
FEMALES										
1974 -										
February	42.4	21.6	63.9	50.6	8.8	23.4	40.6	7.1	2.4	3.2
May	30.9	19.2	50.1	56.6	5.7	18.2	31.9	5.6	1.9	2.5
August	37.9	17.0	55.0	67.1	5.6	18.4	36.5	6.0	2.2	2.8
November	68.6	21.0	89.6	92.1	16.3	40.4	49.1	12.3	2.8	4.3
1975 -										
February	95.3	33.4	128.6	101.9	19.0	52.7	75.9	15.2	4.4	6.2
May	74.1	31.0	105.1	120.0	13.0	38.7	66.4	11.7	3.9	5.1
August	79.7	29.2	108.9	(d)136.8	15.6	44.6	64.3	13.6	3.7	5.3
November (e)	93.4	36.1	129.5	(d)131.6	25.7	56.5	73.0	16.7	4.0	6.0
1976 -										
February (f)	87.6	39.7	127.3	†(d)101.3	21.1	51.2	76.1	14.3	4.2	5.9
PERSONS										
1974 -										
February	93.4	26.8	120.2	98.3	15.8	42.2	78.1	6.0	1.5	2.1
May	71.7	23.5	95.2	104.9	8.3	28.6	66.7	4.2	1.3	1.6
August	94.2	21.5	115.7	142.8	9.2	33.7	82.1	5.2	1.6	2.0
November	167.6	33.4	201.0	200.2	33.2	83.1	117.9	12.1	2.2	3.4
1975 -										
February	232.4	40.1	272.4	222.3	32.2	94.3	178.1	13.1	3.4	4.6
May	191.5	38.1	229.6	259.5	21.3	69.5	160.1	10.0	3.1	3.9
August	195.9	37.5	233.5	(d)295.3	25.2	82.1	151.3	12.0	2.9	3.9
November (e)	231.8	47.3	279.1	(d)277.2	46.0	109.4	169.7	15.6	3.2	4.6
1976 -										
February (f)	224.0	49.3	273.3	†(d)222.8	37.1	99.0	174.3	13.3	3.2	4.5

(a) Aged 15 years and over. For definition, see paragraph 3. (b) The number of unemployed in each group as a percentage of the labour force in the same group. (c) The method used in seasonally adjusting estimates for unemployed persons is to adjust estimates for unemployed persons aged 15 to 19 years looking for their first job and estimates for the remainder of unemployed persons separately and to add the two figures to obtain total estimates for unemployed persons. Estimates for unemployed males and females are treated similarly. (d) All adjustment methods which compute seasonal factors as some average of the seasonal pattern for previous years are subject to inherent limitations when the pattern changes. The method currently used assumes that seasonal variations (such as that which occurs in November when young people leave school and seek employment) are proportional to the level of the series. However, when the number of unemployed becomes exceptionally high this proportional relationship may change. If it does, the change cannot be accommodated quickly enough by the current method. Such a change has been occurring in recent quarters and as a result the seasonally adjusted estimates for August are overstated while those for subsequent surveys are understated. It is difficult in these circumstances to draw any reliable conclusions from the movement in the seasonally adjusted estimates between August 1975 and later periods. (e) The sample size was reduced for the November 1975 survey. Consequently the standard errors for estimates from that survey are larger than usual. For details see the November 1975 issue of *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20) to be issued shortly. (f) Preliminary estimates, subject to revision.

\* Estimates less than 4,000 are not published, because they would be subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

† Affected by the deferral of the interviewing period by one week. It is estimated that had interviewing taken place in the normal period, the seasonally adjusted figure for persons would have been higher by some 5,000 to 10,000.

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NOTE. Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning Mr D.P. Power on 52 6503 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.